

FLATHEAD COUNTY

EAGLE TRANSIT DIAL-A-RIDE SERVICE

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2007



TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Topic of Discussion</u>	<u>Page #</u>
Curb-to-Curb Service -----	3
Door-to-Door -----	3
Scheduling Rides -----	4
Scheduling Pick-up Times -----	5
Scheduling Return Trips -----	6
Pick-up Time Period -----	7
Cancellations -----	7
“No-Show” -----	7
Steps and Ramps -----	8
Size of Wheelchair or Mobility Aid -----	9
Personal Care Attendant -----	10
Fares -----	10
General Ridership	
No Eating, Drinking, and Pets -----	12
Ride Changes -----	12
Oxygen -----	12
Securements -----	12
Packages -----	13
Service Animals -----	13
Holidays -----	13

Flathead County is pleased to provide for the public transportation needs of the area's citizens, including citizens with disabling conditions. The service is always changing and improving. A description of the current service follows.

Eagle Transit (ET) only provides curb-to-curb service. ET asks that passengers be ready for pick up at the **curb**.

However, if help is needed from the door to the vehicle, you may call to request door-to-door service if further assistance is needed to or from doors at first floor level. The ET dispatchers will discuss your particular situation and location to determine if door-to-door service *may* be provided based on safety for drivers and passengers. If necessary, an ET staff person may make an on-site examination.

The guidelines below need to be followed to allow door-to-door service to be provided safely and efficiently, and other conditions may also apply.

Private Residences

- If necessary and requested at the time of the reservation, door-to-door service provides you with driver assistance from the ground floor exit door of your origin to the ET vehicle. It also provides for assistance from the vehicle to a ground level entrance door of your destination.
- If further assistance is necessary through the doors of your origin or destination, that can be requested, but drivers **cannot** provide assistance beyond the threshold of your door or beyond the threshold of the entrance door of your destination.

- Drivers will not enter private homes for any reason.

Business / Medical Facilities / Public Buildings

- If necessary and requested, drivers will assist passengers into and from the main entrance door. When picking up passengers from a business / medical facility / public building, drivers will go through the second door of a foyer. Drivers cannot go beyond this point.
- Drivers will not enter nursing homes, medical facilities, shopping centers, businesses or other public buildings in an attempt to find passengers. Passengers should be waiting at the entrance at least fifteen (15) minutes before their scheduled pick up time. Eagle Transit is a shared ride. Delays are unacceptable because they cause the vehicles to get off schedule and inconvenience other passengers.

Please note also that the ability to safely provide door-to-door service may involve issues such as stairs, ramps, doors, handrails, and pathways, as well as clearing and maintenance of such during the winter months, including such times as when there has been a significant snowfall just in the hours prior to the scheduled pick-up. Only curb-to-curb service (NOT door-to-door service) will be provided to locations when an unsafe condition exists.

Scheduling Rides

How to schedule rides:

Rides are scheduled on a first come, first served basis. The earliest that you can call is any day Monday through Friday

of one week to schedule rides for any time during the current week, or the following week. The latest you can call is the business day before you want to ride. To request rides, call **758-5728** between 7:00 AM and 3:00 PM, Monday through Friday. **No requests for rides will be accepted after 3:00 PM for the next day because the dispatchers will be finalizing the manifests at that time.**

Example of call to arrange a ride:

“This is (name). I live at (address). On (date) I need a ride from my home (or other location) to (destination). I want to be there by (time) and I’d like to return from there at (time).”

Then tell the dispatcher the following information that applies to you:

- Whether help is needed from door to the vehicle
- Whether you use a wheelchair, walker, or other mobility device
- Whether you have a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) or a service animal with you
- Whether you wish for another individual(s) to accompany you
- Phone number to allow for a return call

During the phone call, the ET dispatcher may let you know your pick-up and return times, or may call you back later with that information.

Scheduling Pick-Up Times:

ET will make every effort to schedule a trip at the times desired. However, it may be necessary to negotiate with the passenger and schedule the ride to begin up to one (1) hour before or one (1) hour after the times desired by the passenger.

Scheduling Return Trips:

- Return trips should be scheduled at the time original trips are scheduled. Passengers should anticipate the latest possible time needed for their return and schedule a return trip for that time. If the trip is for a medical purpose, passengers may request their return trip to be listed as a “To-Be-Scheduled” (TBS).
- When passengers are listed as TBS for a return trip, they are to call ET at **758-5728** when they are ready to return. The next available vehicle will be dispatched to pick up as soon as possible, but the passenger may sometimes experience a lengthy wait.
- If a return trip is desired prior to the scheduled return time, passengers are encouraged to notify ET that they are available for an early return. ET will attempt to pick up the passenger as soon as possible, but if the demand for service does not allow this, the passenger will be picked up at the scheduled time.

Vehicle Arrival Times for Pick Up:

ET makes every effort to arrive as close to the scheduled pick-up time as possible. However, the vehicle may arrive up to fifteen (15) minutes before or fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled pick up time.

Example: If ET scheduled for you a 9:30 AM pick-up, the vehicle will arrive between 9:15 AM and 9:45 AM.

Due to the nature of our service, it is necessary for the vehicles to have this flexibility. This thirty (30) minute period of time is

defined as the **PICK-UP TIME PERIOD** and passengers need to be ready to go anytime within that **PICK-UP TIME PERIOD**.

All drivers will arrive within that **PICK-UP TIME PERIOD**. The passenger is expected to be ready and waiting for the ride where he/she can see the vehicle, and board the vehicle within 3 minutes of its arrival. The passenger must go to the curb to board the vehicle unless you have requested door-to-door service. Once the driver has waited the three (3) minutes, and no passenger is waiting at the designated pickup point, the driver will leave and the ride will be considered a “no show”. **A vehicle will not be able to return for a second attempt.**

Cancellations and “No-Shows”

If you are unable to make your scheduled ride for any reason, please call the office at 758-5728 as soon as possible to cancel your ride so that other passengers may use the space. ET drivers **cannot** make cancellations or schedule changes for you.

- A trip may be cancelled up until one (1) hour before the scheduled pick up without any consequence. Be sure to cancel your scheduled return trip also, if applicable. Your return trip will not be automatically cancelled.
- Each time a customer fails to properly notify ET of a cancellation, a “**no-show**” event occurs. These occurrences can prevent other ET customers who request transportation from receiving service and can be costly for the system.
- The accumulation of three “no shows” within a 30-day period will result in the loss of Dial-A-Ride service for 30 days. Three or more 30-day suspensions within a year will

result in the loss of eligibility for one year. If you have been suspended from the program, you have the right to request an appeal of the decision. Appeals must be filed, in writing, within 60 days of the date of the letter of suspension. Appeals should be addressed to:

Jim Atkinson – Director Agency of Aging
160 Kelly Rd
Kalispell, MT 59901

- What is a “No-Show”:
 - You fail to cancel your trip at least one (1) hour before your scheduled pick-up time.
 - You fail to meet the vehicle at your designated pick-up location.
 - You are not ready to go within the **PICK-UP TIME PERIOD** of fifteen (15) minutes before to fifteen (15) minutes after your scheduled pick-up time. Remember, after drivers arrive within the **PICK-UP TIME PERIOD**, you must board the vehicle within 3 minutes. Then they must leave.

Assisting Passengers Using a Wheelchair:

Steps

- ET drivers are not allowed to assist passengers using wheelchairs up or down steps. For the safety of both passenger and driver when steps exist, passengers are responsible for arranging proper assistance from someone other than the ET driver.

Ramps

- In order to assure the safety of our passengers and drivers, if a wheelchair passenger is requesting door-to-door service to a location with a ramp, this can be provided **only** if:
 - The passenger arranges assistance up and down the ramp from someone other than the ET driver

OR

- The ramp complies with the standards for ramps identified in the ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities regulations (i.e. Appendix A to Part 37 of the ADA). (In general, these standards mean that the ramp can not exceed 12 inches of length for every inch of increase in height; there are also some requirements about the type of surface, landings and handrails in some circumstances, etc.) A summary of those ramp regulations is available upon request. An ET staff person will need to examine the ramp with regard to its compliance prior to the first ET driver's use of such ramp. Prior to scheduling the first ride, please request such an examination of the ramp. Otherwise, only curb-to-curb service will be provided at that location.

Maximum Size of Wheelchair or Mobility Aid

A wheelchair is a mobility aid belonging to any class of three or four wheeled devices, usable indoors, design for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered. A "common wheelchair" is such a device which does not exceed 30 inches in width and 48 inches in

length measured two inches above the ground, and does not weigh more than 600 pounds when occupied.

- ET **may not** be able to transport wheelchairs or scooters that are more than 30" wide, 48" long or weigh more than 600 pounds (when occupied).
- Passengers using wheelchairs or mobility aids that exceed 48" long **may request** service and ET staff will perform an individual evaluation to determine **if** service may be provided.
- Passenger must be in an upright and sitting position for transport.
- All wheelchairs and scooters must be in a safe operating condition including handgrips, locking brakes, inflated tires, and should have footrests to safeguard passenger's feet while being wheeled to and from the vehicle.

Personal Care Attendants or Guests

If you need to have the assistance of another person in order to complete your trip or its purpose, you must submit a Certification of Eligibility form that specifies that need. You may take one personal care attendant (PCA) at no additional charge. At the time of scheduling a ride, you must indicate if you will have a PCA with you. Of course, this PCA must get on and get off at the same location as you do.

Fares

- A fare for general riders is one (\$1.00) dollar each time you get on the bus within each city.

- Persons 60 or older can ride for a donation within each city. The suggested donation is 50% of the general fare. Discount punch cards are available.
- Persons with disabilities who have an approved Certification of Eligibility can purchase a punch card at 50% of the general fare within each city.
- Monthly passes which are good for unlimited rides anywhere ET is regularly scheduled are twenty-five (\$25) dollars.
- Intercity routes are:
 - Columbia Falls - Whitefish - \$1.00
 - Columbia Falls - Kalispell - \$3.00
 - Whitefish – Kalispell - \$3.00
- A County-wide Dial-A-Ride service is available for persons with disabilities and seniors. Please call ET for more information at 758-5728.
- Note that some passengers served by ET are transported under contract with various agencies and may not have to pay a fare.
- Fares may be paid with cash or by having a punch card ticket, which is available from any driver or the ET office. Drivers cannot make change. If a passenger has prior approval of ET, the fares may be charged directly to an agreed upon third party. **If a passenger does not have a punch card ticket, cash, or approval to charge to a third party, service will not be provided.**

General Ridership Policy

- No eating, drinking, or smoking is allowed on the bus.
- Pets are not allowed on the bus.
- It is the responsibility of passengers to make sure that the pathway to their home is free of snow and ice.
- If you are a “no-show” for your “going” trip, your return trip is automatically canceled. (This is different for riders who cancel their going trip.) ET may reinstate the return ride if you call within a reasonable time to say that you will need the return trip.
- You may not change your destination or pick-up time on the same day the ride is to be provided.
- If a passenger uses supplemental oxygen, the tank must be portable; i.e., the passenger must be able to carry the tank into the vehicle by themselves. If passenger is in a wheelchair, the tank must be attached to the wheelchair. Once onboard, the portable oxygen tank must ride in a safe condition, for example, in the passenger’s lap, or in front of passenger on floor between seats, or on floor behind modesty panel, and must be tied down.
- All passengers must wear seatbelts, if provided, and stay seated until the bus comes to a complete stop and the doors open.
- All passengers using a wheelchair or scooter must use the restraint system that is used to secure the wheelchair or scooter to the floor of the vehicle, including a shoulder and lap belt as provided.

- The number of packages a passenger can have along is limited to the number of packages the passenger can carry with limited assistance from the driver if needed. No large boxes are allowed.
- Drivers cannot accept tips.
- Service animals are always welcome when necessary. The passenger must have the service animal fully under control at all times so as not to disrupt other passengers or the schedule. The service animal must be groomed and handled in a way that won't be offensive to other passengers, or the offending person may be asked to leave the bus. Drivers cannot and will not assume any responsibility for service animals. At the time of scheduling a ride, please indicate if a service animal will be accompanying you.
- ET may request that passengers be accompanied by a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) for safety reasons.
- All ET service is for non-emergency purposes only. There are no restrictions as to trip purpose for eligible trips.
- ET may suspend or refuse service to any individual whose behavior and/or actions are violent, seriously disruptive, and illegal or causes interruptions to service.
- ET will not operate on the following Holidays:

New Years Day	Martin Luther King Day
President's Day	Memorial Day
4 th of July	Labor Day
Columbus Day	General Election Day
Veteran's Day	Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day	